

**TENNESSEE ANNUAL JUVENILE COURT
STATISTICAL REPORT
PART I**

TENNESSEE COUNCIL OF JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES 2007 ANNUAL JUVENILE STATISTICAL REPORT

THE TENNESSEE COUNCIL OF JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES

The Tennessee Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (TCJFCJ), was created by the Tennessee General Assembly through legislation that was effective July 1, 1982. The TCJFCJ is the official organization of Tennessee judges having juvenile court jurisdiction.

Throughout its history, the Council has represented juvenile court judges and court staff, providing an independent voice regarding issues affecting children, youth, families and communities. The Council meets semi-annually to consider matters concerning their members' official duties and obligations. The Council promotes the best court practices and seeks a clearer understanding of what problems and specific challenges which dependent, neglected, unruly, and delinquent children face when they come before the courts. The Council strives to increase the court's resources and legal options, so they may better meet the needs of Tennessee's children and their families.

TCJFCJ Executive Council

President: Honorable Rachel Anthony – Lauderdale County

Vice President: Honorable Ken Witcher – Macon County

Secretary/Treasurer: Honorable Ray Grimes – Montgomery County

Directors

Immediate Past President: Honorable James F. Watson – McMinn County

Honorable Wayne Shelton – Montgomery County

Honorable Betty Adams Green – Davidson County

Honorable Nolan Goolsby – Putnam County

Honorable Dennis Humphrey – Roane County

Honorable Larry J. Logan – Carroll County

Honorable A. Andrew Jackson – Dickson County

Honorable Jeff D. Rader – Sevier County

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THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) assumed administrative support responsibility for the TCJFCJ in April 2005. Among the staff serving the TCJFCJ are the AOC's general counsel, a juvenile court program specialist, and a juvenile data collection team. The AOC collects juvenile court statistical data and publishes quarterly and annual statistical reports on the activities of the state's juvenile courts as part of the services they provide to the TCJFCJ. The juvenile courts and the clerks of the courts provide juvenile court data as stated in the Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA) § 37-1-506, Report and publishing of juvenile court information, including cases, informal adjustments, pretrial diversions, and identifying information.

AOC Positions

Executive Director:	Elizabeth A. Sykes
General Counsel:	David Haines
Juvenile Court Program Specialist:	Elvira Newcomb
Director, Information Technology:	Ann Lynn Walker
Juvenile Team	
Lead Systems Analyst:	Peach McComb
Juvenile Data Analyst:	Beverly Edmonds
Business Analyst:	Brenda Blythe

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

REFERRAL INFORMATION

In the 2007 calendar year, there were a total of **164,340** referrals to juvenile courts across **137,893** cases, involving **90,553** children and resulting in **253,725** dispositions in Tennessee.

The reader should note that the definition of case is as follows: "All referral reasons/charges reported to the court (via complaint, petition, motion, etc.) on a given day for a given child." It is also important to be aware that the juvenile data is counted based on the date of disposition. This is the date that the case is disposed or adjudicated by the juvenile court and then reported to the TCJFCJ during calendar year 2007.

Over one third or **35.0%** of the children referred were from the four metropolitan areas of Shelby/Memphis - **12,881**, Davidson/Nashville - **8,191**, Knox/Knoxville - **5,915**, and Hamilton/Chattanooga - **4,696**.

Delinquent referrals totaling **76,899** accounted for nearly half of all referrals at **46.8%**. White males in the delinquent category total **32,732** and represent **42.6%** of the juvenile court population outnumbering their female counterparts who total **13,823** and are **18.0%** of the juvenile population with delinquent referrals. African American males in the delinquent category total **19,340** and represent **25.1%** of the juvenile population with delinquent referrals outnumbering their female counterparts who total **7,413** and represent **9.6%** of the juvenile population with delinquent referrals.

REFERRALS BY AGE AND RACE

The 2007 data indicated that nearly one third or **32.8%** of all referrals totaling **53,900** were juveniles 15 and 16 years old. White males represented the greatest number of those referrals in this age category totaling **21,979**, or **40.8%** of the juvenile court population in the 15 through 16 years of age category, their female counterparts totaled **12,236**, representing **22.7%** of juveniles in this age category. African American males represented the third largest number of referrals in the 15 through 16 years of age category, totaling **11,502**, or **21.3%**. Their female counterparts totaled **5,468** or **10.1%** of the juveniles in this age category.

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COURTS WITH THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF MINORITY RACES REFERRED

Court	Percentage
Haywood	87.69%
Shelby	84.64%
Davidson	73.63%
Hardeman	73.60%
Madison	70.36%

MINORITY REFERRALS

The immigrant population in Tennessee has increased and the juvenile courts have found that there has been a corresponding increase in the number of juveniles of different nationalities seen in juvenile court. The courts have asked that the racial categories be expanded to reflect individuals of Middle Eastern descent, for example, who are now being classified as White, African American, or Asian. There is no accurate category currently available in which to report these statistics except as previously noted.

The federal standard states that these juveniles would be included in the White category, but the courts would like the statistics to reflect the juvenile population in their jurisdiction more definitively so they can identify areas of need for additional resources in the allocation and of interpreters and special intervention practices.

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

At the time of their referral to juvenile court, only **14,056** or **15.5%** of all Tennessee children referred were living with both biological parents. Consistent with the data gathered in previous years, the living arrangement of juveniles by race and sex for 2007 data shows that within the general juvenile court population (**90,553**), the highest number of children (**34,229**), were reported to be living "With Mother" at the time of referral to juvenile court. This is **37.8%** of the total of all children referred. The second and third most reported living arrangements for the general juvenile court population were "Unknown" (**14,591**) or (**16.1%**) and "With both Biological Parents" (**14,056**) or (**15.5%**) which represents a slight increase over 2006 at **15.4%**.

SCHOOL STATUS

In 2007, a majority (**65.2%**) of the juvenile court population (**90,553**) were reported as being "Enrolled" in school either full or part-time at the time of referral to juvenile court. **12.4%** were reported as "Not Enrolled" in school, which was a slight decrease from 2006 at **12.8%**. The "Not Enrolled" in school category also included those children who had been expelled. It should be noted that school enrollment of **20,269** or **22.4%** of the juvenile court population was reported as "Unknown".

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SPECIAL EDUCATION

2,994 or **3.3%** of the general juvenile court population was reported as being enrolled in a special education curriculum at the time of referral. **55,804** or **61.6%** of the juvenile court population were reported as “Not Enrolled” in a special education curriculum and the special education status of **31,755** children, or **35.1%** of this same population was reported as “Unknown”.

REFERRAL DISPOSAL INFORMATION

Information regarding **164,340** referrals disposed of by Tennessee juvenile courts was reported in 2007. Nearly half (**76,899**) or **46.8%** of the 2007 referral reasons disposed by juvenile courts fell into the category of alleged Delinquent offenses. Status offenses (**26,517**) represented **16.1%** of the total referral reasons reported to the juvenile court, an increase of **0.4%**. Non-offense referral reasons, Parentage, Special Proceedings, and Dependency and Neglect (**49,657**) comprised an additional **30.2%** of the total

The 2007 data shows the most commonly reported delinquent referral reasons to be “Traffic”, (**19,351**) “Assault” (**7,396**), “Theft of Property” (**7,020**), “Disorderly Conduct” (**6,527**), “Violation of Probation” (**5,717**), and “Possession of Controlled Substances” (**4,237**). The most often reported status offense referral reasons were “Truancy” (**9,343**), “Unruly Behavior” (**5,157**), “Possession of Tobacco Products” (**4,467**), “Violation of Curfew” (**2,982**) “In-state Runaway” (**2,878**), and “Violation of a Valid Court Order” (**1,605**).

“Child Support” (**12,484**), “Dependency and Neglect” (**9,080**), “Judicial Review” (**8,973**), “Custody” (**8,171**), and “Foster Care Review” (**3,822**) are the most prevalent within the non-offense category.

REFERRAL SOURCE

Anyone who perceives a need for the juvenile court to intervene on a child's behalf can refer that child to the juvenile court. Frequently, the referral source is closely related to the reason for referral. For example, schools typically refer truants, while law enforcement officers typically refer children who have committed illegal acts.

“Law Enforcement” was the referral source most often cited at **45.8%**, the “Department of Children’s Services” (DCS) was the second at **9.8%**, and “Parents” were the third at **9.5%**. “Court Staff” at **8.9%** was the fourth most often cited referral source and “School” at **7.7%** was the fifth.

SIX MOST FREQUENT REFERRAL REASONS BY SOURCE IN 2007

When looking at the six (6) most frequently reported referral reasons associated with each referral source in 2007, law enforcement personnel most often referred juveniles for traffic complaints, while custody was the reason most often cited for referral by parents and relatives. Self referrals, other state departments, child and parent, and the District Attorney all had child support issues at the top. With regard to schools, truancy remained the most often cited referral reason and possession of tobacco products was the second.

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Most DCS and social agency referrals were for dependency and neglect issues. Community Service Agencies referred most often for probation violations, which was a change from 2006 when juveniles were most often referred for child support. Victims continued to refer most often for assault while hospitals referred most often for requests for medical treatment, unlike 2006, when hospitals referred most often for paternity and legitimation.

WEAPONS REFERRALS

2007 data shows that of the total children referred **(839)** for Unlawful Possession/Carrying of a Weapon, the largest percentages by age were: **334** or **39.8%** at age 17, **249** or **29.7%** at age 16, and **142** or **16.9%** at age 15. The percentages of children referred for this reason by race and gender were: **494** or **58.9%** African American males, **227** or **27.1%** white males, **36** or **4.3%** African American females, and **22** or **2.6%** white females.

445 children were referred for Carrying Weapons on School Property with **381** or **85.6%** of those referrals at ages 13 through 17. The percentages of children referred for this reason by race and gender in 2007 were as follows: **199** or **44.7%** white males, **149** or **33.5%** African American males, **49** or **11.0%** African American females, and **29** or **6.5%** white females.

INTAKE ACTIONS AT REFERRAL

2007 data shows that petitions were filed in **65.0%** of the 2007 referrals and motions were filed in **4.9%**. These figures reflect the number of petitions or motions that resulted in some kind of judicial action.

Citations, which law enforcement may use in lieu of a petition, were issued in **12.8%** of the referrals, paternity actions accounted for **0.03%**, and judicial, administrative and foster care reviews accounted for **7.1%**.

DETENTION INFORMATION

One of the immediate decisions the court must make after receiving an offense related referral is whether or not to detain the child. When the court believes that a child referred for offense related reasons is in need of protection or may be a threat to the community, the court may elect to detain the child.

2007 detention statistics revealed that of the children referred **(90,553)** percentages fell into the following categories: **8.3%** in the "Juvenile Detention Facility", **0.7%** in "Non-secure Placement", and **0.7%** in "Other". The data also shows that **81.6%** of the children referred were in the "Does Not Apply" category because they were not considered for detention.

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DISPOSITIONAL PROCEDURES FOR CY 2007

After a referral is made to the juvenile court, decisions are made regarding how the court will proceed. If the decision is made to handle the referral informally, two options are open to the court: pretrial diversion and informal adjustment. These two procedures are quite similar in that they are both a voluntary agreement between the court officer, the child, and the parents that address the problem, but avoids a formal court hearing and an official finding of guilt.

The difference between pretrial diversion and informal adjustment is in the extent to which the judge or referee is involved. Pretrial diversion requires judicial approval of the voluntary agreement. Informal adjustment is subject to judicial approval, but does not require it prior to initiation. 2007 disposition procedures information reveals that **15.6%** of all the referrals to juvenile court were handled by informal adjustment. **5.8%** of all referrals disposed by other actions were handled by pretrial diversions.

When the court believes that it is in the best interest of the child and/or the community, a formal adjudicatory proceeding or hearing is held regarding the child's referral to juvenile court. The adjudicatory hearing is a formal proceeding in which the judge or referee determines whether the motion made on behalf of the child (or the complaint made against the child) is substantiated. If substantiation of the motion/complaint occurs, a dispositional hearing must be held; this can happen either immediately or at a later date. The statistics indicate that **43.8%** of the referrals to juvenile court resulted in a formal adjudicatory proceeding. Of the formally adjudicated proceedings, **65.4%** were substantiated, **25.6%** formally dismissed and **9.0%** were retired.

NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN TRANSFERRED TO ADULT COURT BY RACE AND SEX

The 2007 data was analyzed to determine the number of children transferred to adult court for alleged delinquent offenses. The data shows that **291** children were transferred to adult court in 2007. Males were the overwhelming majority of transferred children (**263**) at **90.4%**. **74.6%** of the children transferred were African American males, while their white male counterparts represented **15.8%** of the overall transfers. African American females represented **5.2%**. White females represented **1.0%** of all transfers.

This represents nearly five times as many delinquent African American males transferred to adult courts (**217**) than white males (**46**), despite the fact that there are more than twice as many delinquent white males (**33,996**) as there are African American males (**15,912**) in the general juvenile population. Delinquent African American males commit offenses listed under Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA) §37-1-134, transfer from juvenile court (1) at a higher rate in both frequency and percentage than delinquent white males.

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JUVENILE COURT REFERRALS DISPOSED STATE-WIDE BASED ON NUMBER OF REFERRALS

Juvenile court cases and referrals can be disposed by judges, referees, youth services officers, or probation officers. All cases resulting in a formal hearing and adjudication must be disposed by judicial staff, which includes judges, referees or special judges. Cases that are handled informally through informal adjustment or other informal, non-judicial actions can be disposed by the court officers.

The 2007 data shows that **55.0%** of all referral reasons **(164,340)** were disposed by judicial staff: **55.0%** by Judges, **29.8%** by Referees. Another **11.8%** were disposed by Youth Services/Probation Officers, and **3.5%** in Other/Not Reported.

COMPARISONS

Comparing calendar year 2007 with 2006, the number of children referred in Tennessee increased by nearly four percent. Although the number increased, there were fewer children referred in categories of Delinquent, Other Violations and Dependency/Neglect. The categories that experienced an increase in 2007 were Status/Unruly, Parentage, Special Proceedings, and Other.

This year the AOC made great strides uncovering and reporting issues with court data submissions and identifying areas for further review and corrections. There is still much to be done in this area as we continue to work closely with the courts and gain even higher levels of accuracy from each subsequent annual statistical report.

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JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM IN TENNESSEE

JUVENILE COURT PHILOSOPHY

Tennessee's juvenile courts try to ensure that each child coming under their jurisdiction receives the best chance for suitable physical, mental, and moral development. The courts consider each child's case on its individual merits while adhering to three primary obligations: (1) protecting the community and society at large; (2) acting in the best interest and welfare of the child by means of protection, treatment, and rehabilitation; (3) upholding the dignity of the law. The courts continually seek out and implement changes in juvenile programs and operating methods which would benefit their clients in attempting to break the cycle of juvenile delinquency and dysfunctional behavior.

Tennessee is home to 98 juvenile courts with 115 juvenile court judges. Of these 98 courts, 17 are designated "special act" juvenile courts while the remaining 81 are general sessions courts with juvenile jurisdiction. Each court, with the exception of Bristol and Johnson City, is county-based and administered with at least one juvenile court which is located in each of the state's 95 counties. While all of Tennessee's courts with juvenile jurisdiction do their best to follow the procedural guidelines established by the Tennessee Rules of Juvenile Procedure, there is little standardization in juvenile court size, case management procedures, and court administrative practices. This means that the systems and practices in Tennessee's juvenile courts vary widely and tend to reflect the needs and preferences of the people living in that particular community.

JUVENILE COURT JURISDICTION

A juvenile is defined as any individual who is under the chronological age of eighteen (18) years and who has not been previously transferred to adult court.

Juvenile courts deal not only with delinquency and status offenses, but also with issues concerning dependency and neglect, child abuse, child support, custody issues, establishing parentage, visitation, and the need for medical and/or mental health treatment for children. Tennessee's juvenile courts have jurisdiction within the following areas:

- Adjudication of children as dependent, neglected, abused, status/unruly, or delinquent
- Determination of custody
- Termination of parental rights
- Ordering of treatment, evaluation and/or commitment of mentally retarded and/or mentally ill children
- Commitment of children to the custody of the Department of Children Services
- Establishment of parentage
- Ordering and enforcement of child support for children of unwed parents

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- Establishing visitation for non-custodial parents
- Enforcement of the compulsory school attendance laws
- Removal of the age restrictions on a minor's application for a marriage license
- Giving of judicial consent to a minor's employment or enlistment in the armed services if law requires such consent
- Giving of judicial consent to the medical treatment of a child when his/her parents or guardians are unable to do so
- Judicial authorization of an abortion without parental consent
- Adjudication of alleged traffic violations by persons under the age of eighteen
- Transfer of serious delinquency cases to criminal court for trial as adults

Pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA) § 37-1-159, Appeals, the juvenile court is a court of record. It may enforce its orders in any way in which a court of equity may enforce its orders and decrees, including by imprisonment and/or by fine for contempt.

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JUVENILE COURT PROFESSIONAL STAFF

The dedication of the juvenile court staff is crucial to a smoothly functioning juvenile court. The typical juvenile court professional staff is comprised of the juvenile court judge; referees (who are present primarily in the larger courts); youth services officers and/or probation officers; and the juvenile court clerk.

JUVENILE COURT JUDGE

The juvenile court judge must be 30 years old, licensed to practice law (unless elected to the post prior to 1982 or if the county has no qualified attorney), a resident of his/her district for one year, and elected by the people. The judge is the chief administrator of the court in addition to his/her judicial duties and is seen as having the following characteristics:

- Is learned in the law
- Possesses administrative ability and experience
- Maintains a broad acquaintance with modern social problems affecting children and youth
- Has a realistic understanding of children and their behavior relative to their total life needs

JUVENILE COURT REFEREE

The referee is appointed by the judge and may be directed to hear any case or class of cases. He or she must be licensed to practice law and has the same authority and powers as the judge to issue process and to conduct proceedings. Referees are generally appointed when the court's juvenile justice population is greater than one judge can manage, or when a commitment is probable and the judge is not an attorney. Cases heard and adjudicated by a referee may be appealed to the judge.

YOUTH SERVICES OFFICER AND PROBATION OFFICER

The youth services officer (YSO) and probation officer (PO) are officials of the court and are as essential to judicial process functions as they are to children's welfare within the juvenile justice system. Their duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Juvenile Court Intake
- Pre-Hearing Investigations
- Referral
- Supervision of Youth
- Detention Screenings
- Counseling
- Record Keeping

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JUVENILE COURT CLERK

The juvenile court clerk is the records keeping and management backbone of the juvenile court. The clerk maintains separate minutes, dockets, and legal records of all matters pertaining to juvenile court proceedings as required by law. Juvenile court clerks also collect all fees, fines, and court costs assessed by the juvenile court.

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JUVENILE COURT DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

DATA SUBMISSION AND REPORTS

All 98 Tennessee juvenile courts reported data to the TCJFCJ in 2007. Each court submitted its juvenile court data as required by Tennessee Code Annotated § 37-1-506. This data may be published and made available to any person upon request.

The courts used either JIF98, a data collection software program provided by the TCJFCJ, or other data collection software that they obtained for their court. Those courts using other data collection software are required to adhere to the data validation standards developed by AOC staff which help insure data accuracy. The courts submitted their data on computer readable media, or as electronic mail attachments. Tennessee juvenile courts have reported data to the TCJFCJ for the past 14 years, thereby distinguishing Tennessee as having one of the relatively few state-wide juvenile court databases in the country. All data is validated, any corrections are solicited from the courts, and the data is further analyzed and summarized to produce the following reports:

- Monthly Missing Data (if required)
- Monthly Data Validation
- Quarterly Summary
- Year-to-Date Summary
- Annual Summary
- Annual Demographic Data Validation
- Ad Hoc (by request)

DATA COLLECTED

The basic data collected in this process falls within the following categories:

- Referral and intake information
- Formal and informal court actions
- Dependency and neglect information
- Demographic information
- Detention information
- Disposition/Outcome information
- Internal periodic case reviews
- Formal judicial reviews

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UNITS OF COUNT

The Council uses four (4) units of count.

1. Number of Children
2. Number of Cases
3. Number of Referrals
4. Number of Dispositions/Outcomes

Counting **children** is accomplished by using the unique identification number that the court assigns to each child. This identification method insures that each child will be counted only once for statistical purposes.

Each child may have one (1) or more cases. A **case** is defined as: "All referral reasons/charges reported to the court (via complaint, petition, motion, etc.) on a given day for a given child". This means that one case on an individual child may contain up to five **referral reasons**. The top five (5) referral reasons or charges on one referral date in each case are currently collected for statistical purposes. A **referral** is defined as a complaint, offense or reason that the juvenile court is involved with the child. Each case or referral has at least one (1) or more **dispositions** or **outcomes**, so the number of dispositions or outcomes may exceed the number of referrals.

The **disposition** or **outcome** is the definitive action taken or treatment plan decided regarding a particular case. The **disposition date**, which is the date that the case is disposed, is used to determine when the case will be counted and reported for statistical purposes. The Council determined that calendar year shall be used for the annual reporting period.

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FUTURE JUVENILE COURT STATISTICAL DATA COLLECTION SYSTEM

Several initiatives are underway to improve juvenile court data collection and reporting methods. One of those initiatives is a new Juvenile Court Statistical Data Collection System which will replace the current JIF98 Data Collection System that has been in use for about 12 years. The future data collection system will be designed so that it is technologically up-to-date, flexible, and easy to modify to accommodate data collection needs as they arise.

There are several limitations to the current system. The JIF98 system does not allow courts to request case information or correct data once it is loaded. The future system will allow the courts to update their own juvenile court case information, make corrections, and create statistical reports. This will eliminate the processing and transmission time the courts are now experiencing as they must request reports from the AOC. The courts may still request reports and the AOC will continue to provide the reporting services currently offered, but the courts will have more flexibility by being able to run their own reports. The replacement system will also be more efficient in utilizing data extracts from the courts that already have their own case management, data collection, and reporting systems.

The current JIF98 data collection system has a limited amount of available storage space for information. Many of the courts collect more extensive juvenile information than there are categories and iterations allowed in JIF98. The future data collection system will be aligned with the Tennessee Code Annotated which means that the Referral Reason categories will be expanded. The referral reasons that may be collected and counted for each juvenile will increase from the top five (5) offenses to every referral in each case. The Case Outcomes will also increase from eight (8) total occurrences and will be expanded.

A report was created that identified how frequently the juvenile courts were forced to select "Unknown" or "Other" as outcome actions because of the lack of suitable choices in the current system. The report was distributed to each court and they were asked to provide additional Outcome Actions that will result in a more accurate portrayal of how juvenile cases were disposed in each court.

The future system will capture much more information and will be easy to modify to respond to changes in legislation that affect the juvenile court process. The goal is to make it easier for the courts to collect and transmit accurate information as well as to streamline business procedures. These expanded capabilities will mean that the courts will be able to identify areas of concern earlier and with far more accuracy. This will allow each court to address issues they have identified and position their limited resources where they will be most effective.

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The first and second phases of the Juvenile Court Statistical Data Collection Study were completed in late 2006. These were the first steps on the road to system development. The focus of the first phase of the project was to research and document business requirements and methods. The AOC sent a team to each of the Grand Divisions (East, Middle, and West Tennessee) to facilitate Joint Application Development (JAD) sessions. JAD sessions are the most efficient way to gather work flow information and to document business requirements. The teams met with subject matter experts (SMEs) who volunteered to assist with the JAD sessions. Each group had representatives from small, medium, and large courts thus insuring that business processes were documented from as many points of view as possible. People on the job possess the most skills and are in the best position to make suggestions for improvements.

Another part of the study focused on juvenile court workflows and data collection method. The team created surveys and requested extensive information from every court with juvenile jurisdiction. They collected current information on each court's specific software systems and equipment. This gave the team a clearer understanding of what equipment would be necessary to support the new data collection system at the local level.

The second phase of this project was to determine the best planning and system development method with an eye toward system integrity, usability, and adaptability. The decision to develop the software in-house at the AOC was reached after extensive research into all of the available system development methods inside and outside the State environment. The same experienced resources that were used in the requirements gathering phases of the project will be used to develop the new system software in conjunction with contract programming resources.

The next phase of this project was to build a viable infrastructure and foundation for the future system. This was accomplished by extensive analysis and documentation of the existing data collection and reporting system, business practices, workflows, and database structure. The creation of an automated data validation, correction, and reporting system and centralized database was completed in 2007. These automation processes allowed the juvenile project team to quickly process, authenticate, and modify the data. All reports were incorporated into this database structure resulting in a far more data-responsive reporting process. As a result, requested statistical information could be researched and the reports created, published, and distributed in hours instead of the days or weeks previously experienced.

Another part of this initiative was the design and creation of a secure, web-based data review process which was launched in early 2008. This process enabled data collectors in juvenile courts to review their statistics on-line, in a secure environment, saving postage, paper, and numerous man-hours.

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JUVENILE COURT REFERRAL PROCESS

The basic juvenile court process in Tennessee is comprised of three central phases:

1. Intake
2. Adjudication
3. Outcomes/Disposition

Juvenile court intake is a process by which the court reviews information in order to determine whether it has the authority to intervene in a child's life and in what manner it will administer its authority. The components of the intake process are referral to intake, detention screening, and assessment of how to handle the complaint.

Referral to intake begins with a complaint that has been filed. The complaints are filed by law enforcement, parents or other individuals or agencies requesting that the court exercise its authority. If the complainant requests that the juvenile be detained, the intake officer performs a detention screening to determine if there is probable cause (legal sufficiency) that the child committed the alleged offense and is subject to detention in accordance with the statute. The intake officer then determines if the complaint should be excluded, informally adjusted (a voluntary agreement between the intake officer, the child and the parents), or if a petition should be filed.

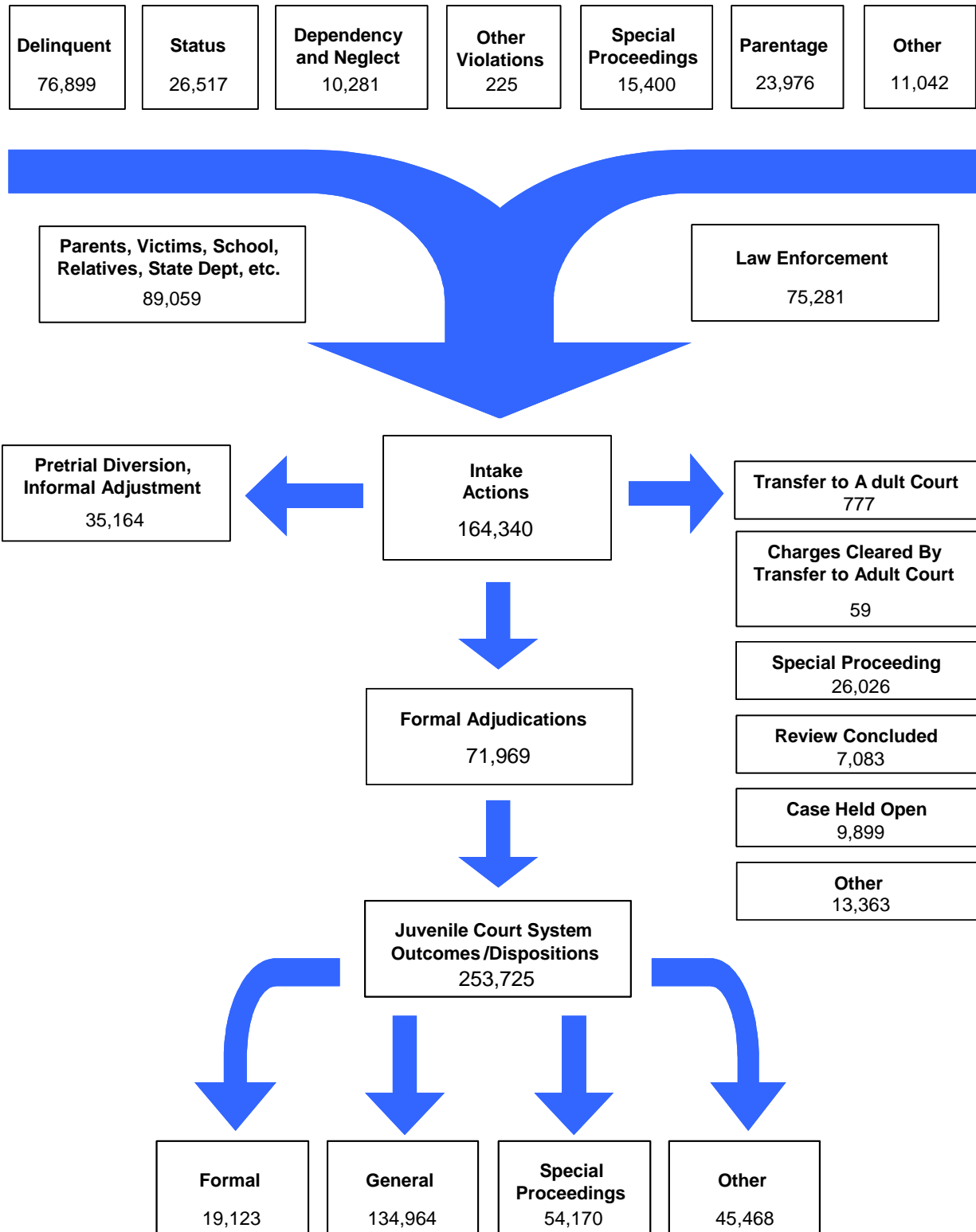
In most instances if a petition is filed the case goes into the adjudicatory phase. The juvenile court judge or referee hears the case in the adjudicatory phase to determine if the allegations in the petition are true. The court considers only formally admitted evidence in making its decision. When the allegations are substantiated, the judge will either proceed immediately or will set a later hearing date to determine the appropriate case outcome or disposition. If the allegations are not substantiated or cannot be proven, the petition will be dismissed.

The purpose of the dispositional phase is to determine an appropriate course of action for the child while taking into consideration his or her circumstances. The disposition occurs when the attempt is made to meet the child's social and rehabilitative needs through an appropriate course of treatment or action.

The Juvenile Court Referral Process Chart on the next page is a graphic depiction of the referral process and shows how many referrals were disposed state-wide in 2007.

**TENNESSEE COUNCIL OF JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES
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**The Juvenile Court Referral Process
CY 2007**



A map of Tennessee showing its 95 counties. The counties are color-coded based on their political affiliation: red for Republican-leaning, blue for Democratic-leaning, and white for swing or unclassified. The red counties include Lake, Obion, Weakley, Henry, Dyer, Gibson, Camell, Benton, Crockett, Hender son, Madison, Chester, Haywood, Tipton, Shelby, Fayette, Hardeman, McNairy, Hardin, and Lauderdale. The blue counties include Sullivan, Hancock, Hawkins, Nash, Carter, Johnson, Unicoi, Greene, Claiborne, Hancock, Sevier, Union, Grainger, Campbell, Morgan, Anderson, Knox, Blount, Loudon, Monroe, Meigs, Sequatchie, Polk, Bradley, McMinn, Rhea, Frazier, Bledsoe, Hamilton, Marion, Franklin, Lincoln, Giles, Lawrence, Wayne, Perry, Lewis, Hickman, Dickson, Cheatham, Davidson, Wilkes, Putnam, Jack, Overton, Fentress, Pickett, Clay, Macon, Robertson, Montgomery, Stewart, Houston, Humphreys, DeKalb, Cannon, Rutledge, Bedford, Coffee, Grundy, Marshall, Maury, William son, and Moore. The white counties include Scott, Hancock, Claiborne, Union, Grainger, Campbell, Morgan, Anderson, Knox, Blount, Loudon, Monroe, Meigs, Sequatchie, Polk, Bradley, McMinn, Rhea, Frazier, Bledsoe, Hamilton, Marion, Franklin, Lincoln, Giles, Lawrence, Wayne, Perry, Lewis, Hickman, Dickson, Cheatham, Davidson, Wilkes, Putnam, Jack, Overton, Fentress, Pickett, Clay, Macon, Robertson, Montgomery, Stewart, Houston, Humphreys, DeKalb, Cannon, Rutledge, Bedford, Coffee, Grundy, Marshall, Maury, William son, and Moore.

Anderson	Cocke	Greene	Jefferson	McMinn	Roane	Tipton
Bedford	Coffee	Grundy	Johnson	McNairy	Robertson	Trousdale
Benton	Crockett	Hamblen	Johnson City	Meigs	Rutherford	Unicoi
Bledsoe	Cumberland	Hamilton	Knox	Monroe	Scott	Union
Blount	Davidson	Hancock	Lake	Montgomery	Sequatchie	Van Buren
Bradley	Decatur	Hardeman	Lauderdale	Moore	Sevier	Warren
Bristol	DeKalb	Hardin	Lawrence	Morgan	Shelby	Washington
Campbell	Dickson	Hawkins	Lewis	Obion	Smith	Wayne
Cannon	Dyer	Haywood	Lincoln	Overton	Stewart	Weakley
Carroll	Fayette	Henderson	Loudon	Perry	Sullivan Div I	White
Carter	Fentress	Henry	Macon	Pickett	Sullivan Div II	Williamson
Cheatham	Franklin	Hickman	Madison	Polk	Sumner	Wilson
Chester	Gibson	Houston	Marion	Putnam		
Claiborne	Giles	Humphreys	Marshall	Rhea		
Clay	Grainger	Jackson	Maury			

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TENNESSEE REGIONAL AND METROPOLITAN AREA MAP

Tennessee is divided into eight (8) major regions and four (4) metropolitan areas. The Regions are shown on the map below.



REGIONS:

East Region: (Counties) Anderson, Blount, Campbell, Claiborne, Cocke, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Loudon, Monroe, Morgan, Roane, Scott, Sevier and Union

Mid-Cumberland Region: (Counties) Cheatham, Dickson, Houston, Humphreys, Montgomery, Robertson, Rutherford, Stewart, Sumner, Trousdale, Williamson and Wilson

Northeast Region: (Counties) Bristol City, Carter, Greene, Hancock, Hawkins, Johnson City, Sullivan Division 1, Sullivan Division 2, Unicoi and Washington

Northwest Region: (Counties) Benton, Carroll, Crockett, Dyer, Gibson, Henry, Johnson, Lake, Obion and Weakley

South Central Region: (Counties) Bedford, Coffee, Giles, Hickman, Lawrence, Lewis, Lincoln, Marshall, Maury, Moore, Perry and Wayne

Southeast Region: (Counties) Bledsoe, Bradley, Franklin, Grundy, Marion, McMinn, Meigs, Polk, Rhea and Sequatchie

Southwest Region: (Counties) Chester, Decatur, Fayette, Hardeman, Hardin, Haywood, Henderson, Lauderdale, Madison, McNairy and Tipton

Upper Cumberland Region: (Counties) Cannon, Clay, Cumberland, DeKalb, Fentress, Jackson, Macon, Overton, Pickett, Putnam, Smith, Van Buren, Warren and White

METROPOLITAN AREAS:

Davidson County/Nashville

Shelby County/Memphis

Hamilton County/Chattanooga

Knox County/Knoxville

**TENNESSEE COUNCIL OF JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES
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NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN REFERRED TO JUVENILE COURTS FOR CY 2007

Tennessee is divided into eight **(8)** major regions and four **(4)** metropolitan areas. These areas are shown on the previous page. The table and chart on the next page represent the number of juveniles referred to juvenile courts by region and metropolitan area. The East region referred the highest number of white males **6,791** and white females **4,891**. These numbers represent **53.4%** and **38.4%** of the East region's total juvenile court population **12,725** respectively. The Shelby County Metro area referred the highest number of African American males **6,333** and African American females **4,167**. These numbers represent **49.2%** and **32.3%** of Shelby County Metro area's total juvenile court population **12,881** respectively.

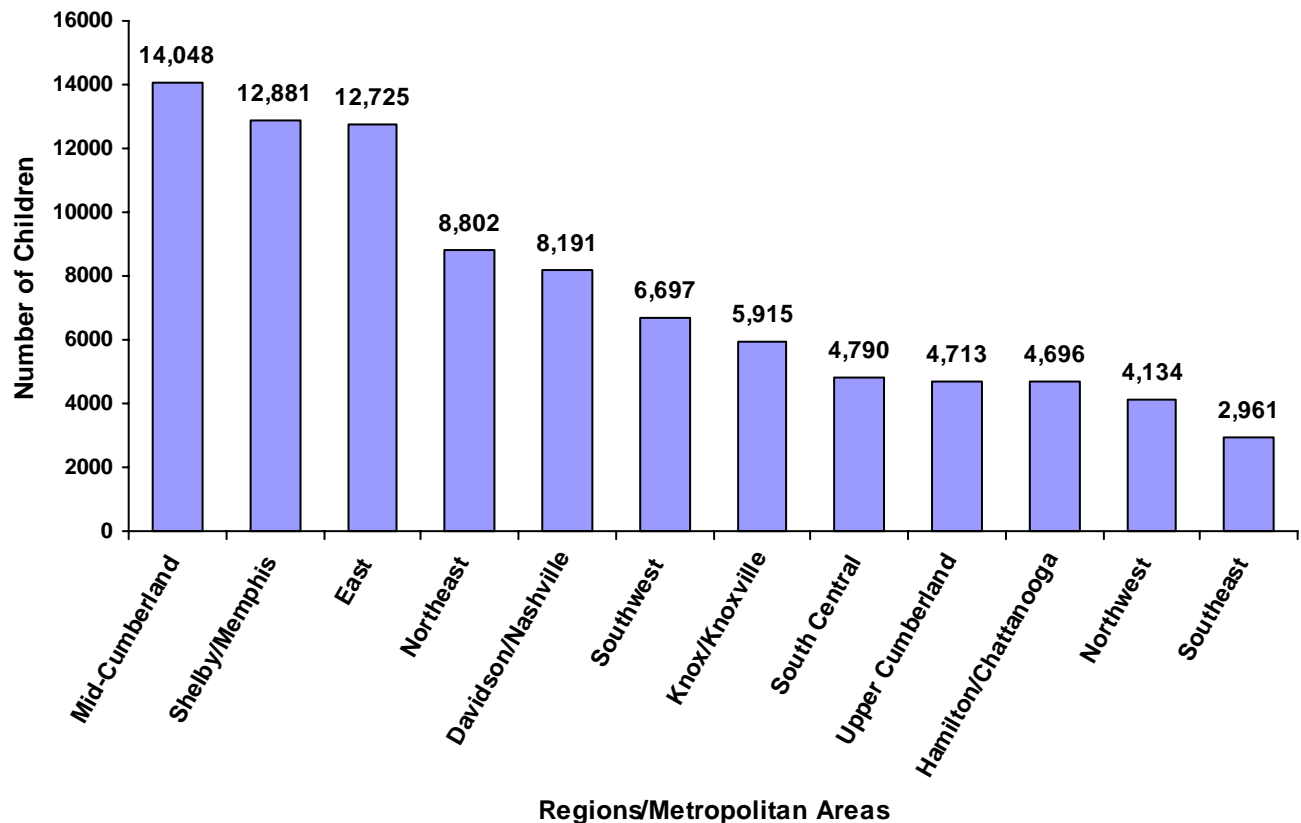
TENNESSEE COUNCIL OF JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES

2007 ANNUAL JUVENILE COURT STATISTICAL REPORT

Children Referred to Juvenile Court by Region, Race and Sex for CY 2007 Includes Geographical Regions and Major Metropolitan Areas

	White Male	African American Male	Other Race Male	White Female	African American Female	Other Race Female	Unknown Race or Sex	Total	% of All Children Referred
Davidson/Nashville	1,277	2,664	156	877	1,885	140	1,192	8,191	9.05%
East	6,791	384	90	4,891	188	76	305	12,725	14.05%
Hamilton/Chattanooga	1,223	1,398	31	890	1,054	21	79	4,696	5.19%
Knox/Knoxville	2,088	640	69	1,532	456	50	1,080	5,915	6.53%
Mid-Cumberland	6,259	1,472	333	3,888	841	223	1,032	14,048	15.51%
Northeast	4,445	218	94	3,238	145	71	591	8,802	9.72%
Northwest	1,877	536	41	1,132	325	24	199	4,134	4.57%
Shelby/Memphis	1,176	6,333	80	802	4,167	60	263	12,881	14.22%
South Central	2,499	345	52	1,506	201	42	145	4,790	5.29%
Southeast	1,668	148	39	1,006	68	17	15	2,961	3.27%
Southwest	1,992	1,712	98	1,294	1,173	53	375	6,697	7.40%
Upper Cumberland	2,701	62	31	1,691	25	24	179	4,713	5.20%
Totals	33,996	15,912	1,114	22,747	10,528	801	5,455	90,553	

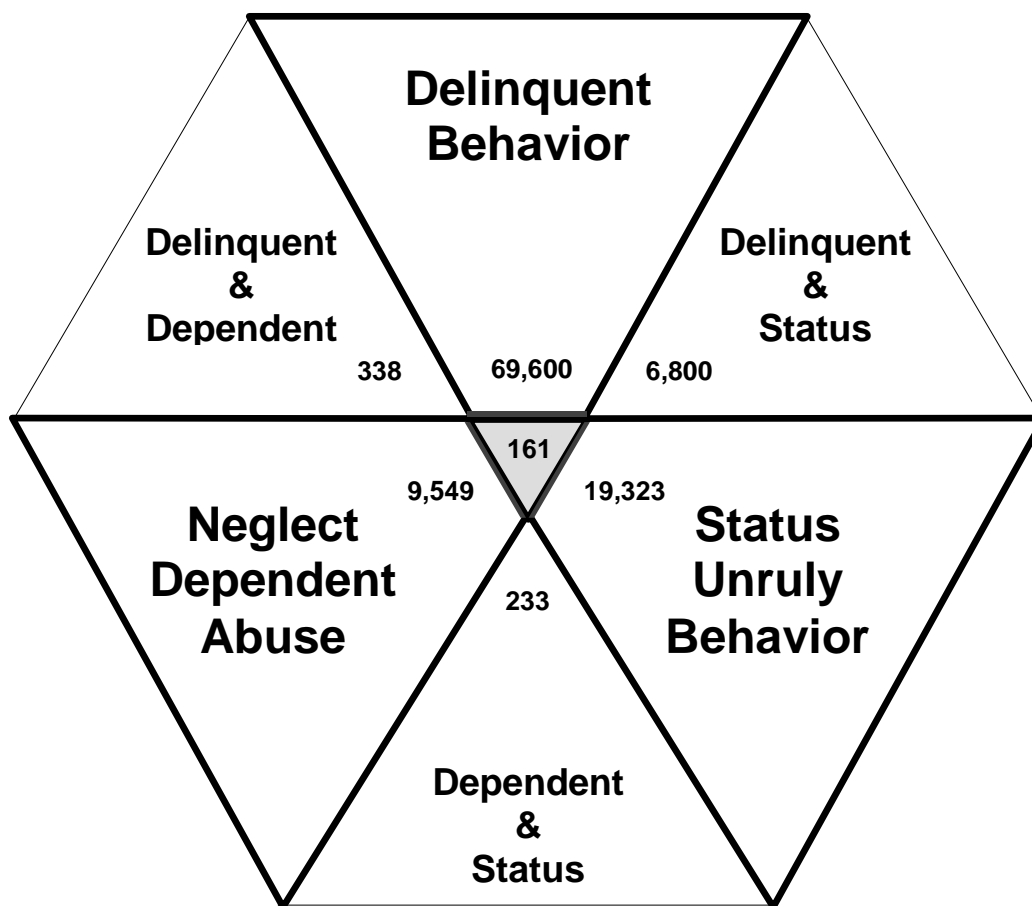
Children Referred to Juvenile Court by Region/Metropolitan Areas



**TENNESSEE COUNCIL OF JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES
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Delinquent, Dependent/Neglect/Abuse, and Status/Unruly Referrals for CY 2007

Total = 106,004



The remaining referrals are for:
Custody, Visitation, Paternity/Legitimation, Child Support,
Special Procedures and Other Referrals

Each child may be counted
in more than one category

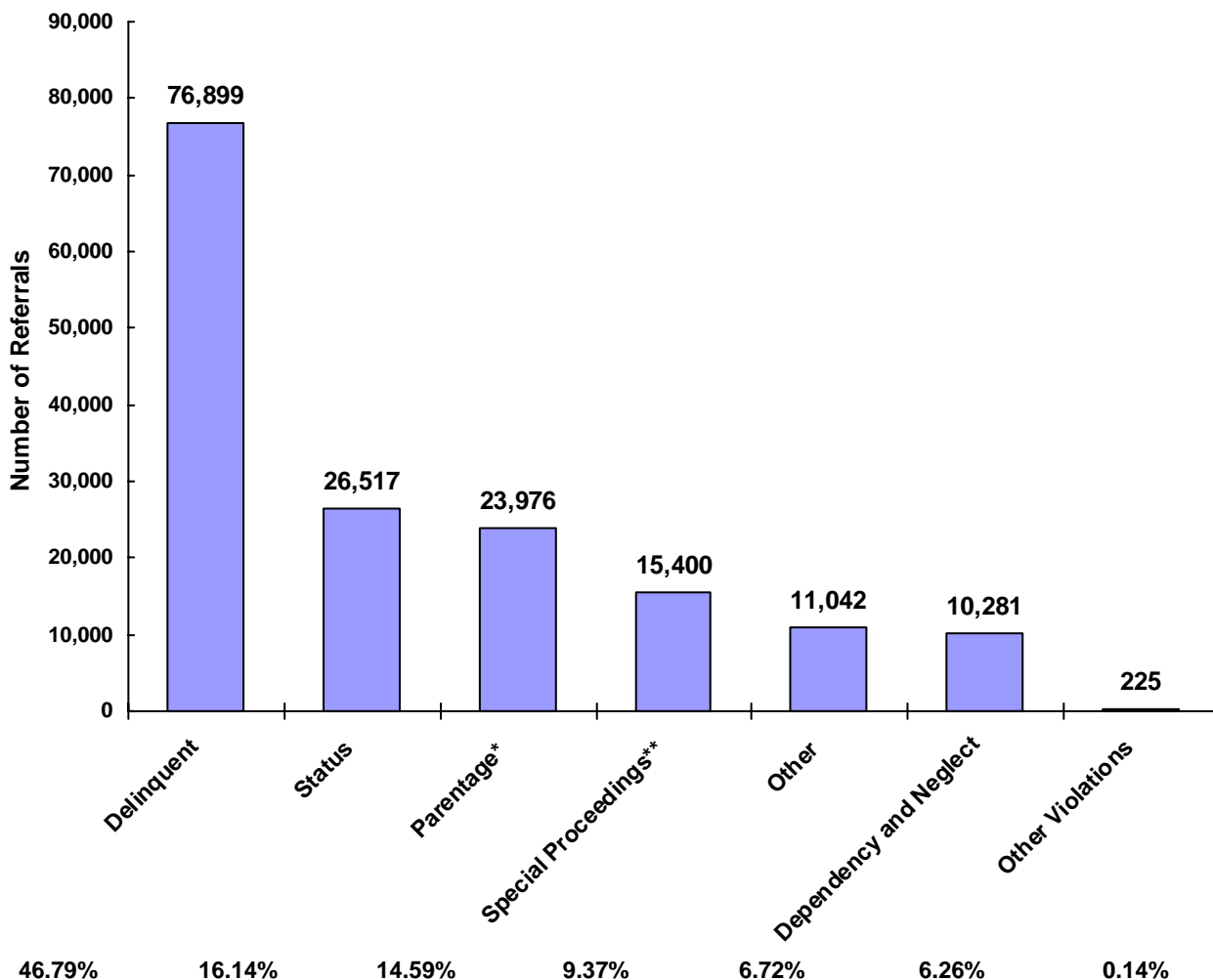
Total number of individual children for ALL referrals
disposed by juvenile courts during CY 2007 equals
90,553

Children can have referrals in multiple categories. The drawing above shows that in the year 2007 there were 69,600 individual children referred to juvenile courts in Tennessee for delinquent referrals, 19,323 for status/unruly behavior, and 9,549 for neglect, dependent or abuse referrals. Of these children there were 6,800 that had a delinquent AND a status/unruly referral. There were 338 children that were referred for delinquent behavior AND a neglect, dependent or abuse allegation. There were 233 children referred that had both a status/unruly referral AND a neglect, dependent or abuse allegation. Also, there were 161 children that had a delinquent referral, a status/unruly referral AND a neglect, dependent or abuse allegation.

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Referrals by Type of Offense in CY 2007

Total Referrals = 164,340



* Parentage includes: Custody, Visitation, Paternity/Legitimation and Child Support

**Special Proceedings include: Judicial Review, Administrative Review, Foster Care Review, Request for Medical Treatment and Consent to Marry

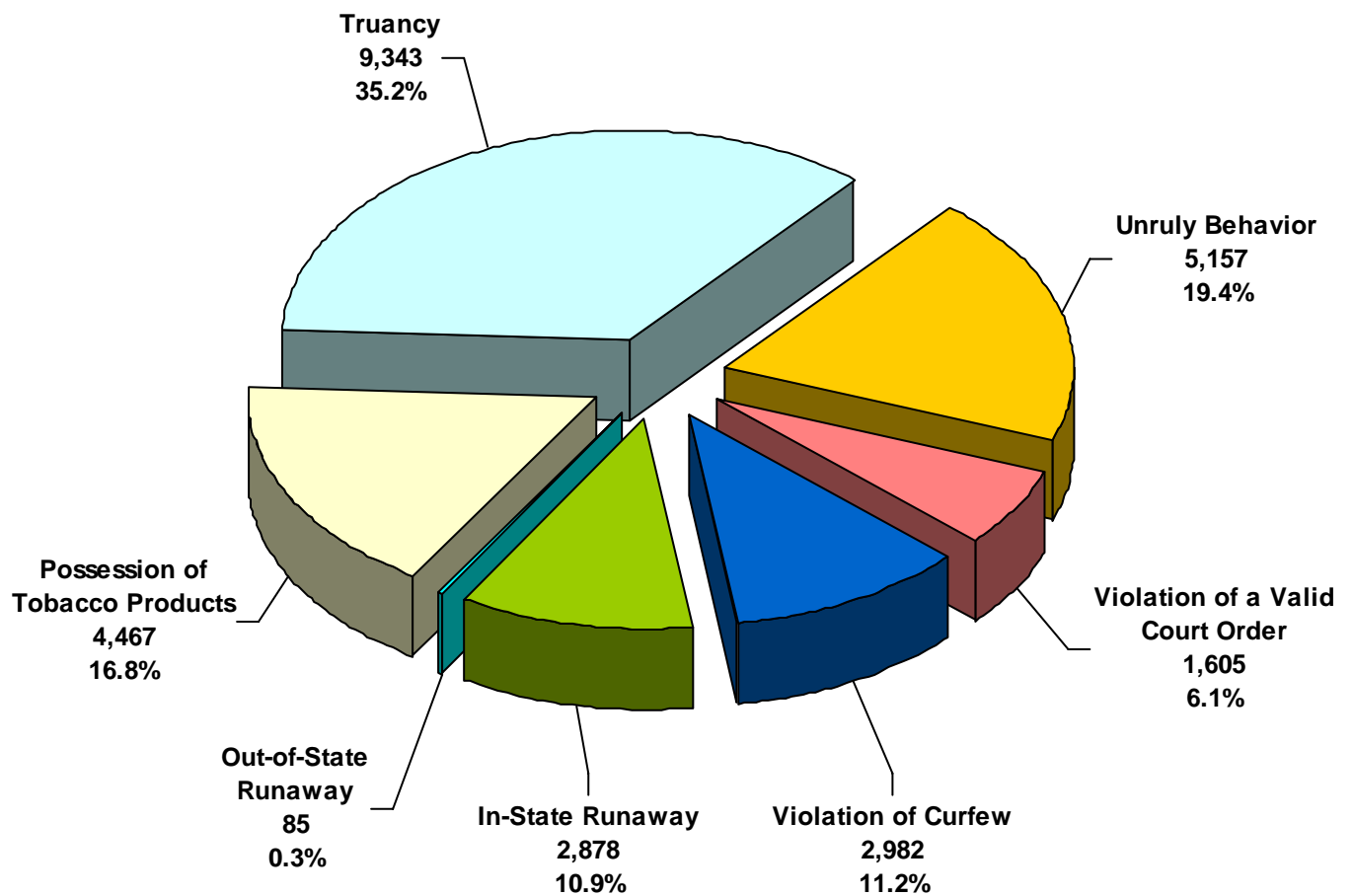
With all 98 Tennessee Juvenile Courts participating, information regarding a total of 90,553 children and 137,893 cases were reported to TCJFCJ.

During 2007, the greatest percentage of all referrals were for alleged Delinquent offenses. Status/Unruly offenses represented the next highest category of all referral reasons.

A Status offense is an offense committed by a child that if committed by an adult, would not be considered an offense or unlawful act. An example of this is smoking when not legally an adult.

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**Referrals for Status/Unruly Offenses in CY 2007
Total Status/Unruly Referrals = 26,517**



Truancy remained the most often reported referral reason within the Status/Unruly category of offenses for CY 2007 while Unruly Behavior remained the second most reported status offense.

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TENNESSEE COUNCIL OF JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES 2007 ANNUAL JUVENILE STATISTICAL REPORT

CHILDREN REFERRED TO JUVENILE COURTS

CHILDREN REFERRED WITH DELINQUENT, STATUS/UNRULY AND DEPENDENT, NEGLECT AND ABUSE ALLEGATIONS CY 2007

The tables on the next page show sex and race by three (3) categories:

1. Delinquent
2. Status/Unruly
3. Neglected/Dependent

White males in the delinquent category total **32,732** and represent **42.6%** of the juvenile court population with delinquent referrals **76,899** outnumbering their female counterparts who total **13,823** and are **18.0%** of the juvenile population with delinquent referrals. African American males in the delinquent category total **19,340** and represent **25.1%** of the juvenile population with delinquent referrals outnumbering their female counterparts who total **7,413** and represent **9.6%** of the juvenile population with delinquent referrals.

White males in the status/unruly category total **11,025** and represent **41.6%** of the total juvenile court population **26,517** with status/unruly referrals outnumbering their female counterparts who total **8,024** and represent **30.3%** of the total juvenile population with status/unruly referrals. African American males in the status/unruly category total **3,761** and represent **14.2%** of the total juvenile population with status/unruly referrals and outnumber their female counterparts who total **2,290** and represent **8.6%** of the total juvenile population with status/unruly referrals.

White males in the neglected/dependent category total **3,193** and represent **31.1%** of the total juvenile court population **10,281** with neglected/dependent referrals and were outnumbered by their female counterparts who total **3,189** and represent **31.0%** of the total juvenile population with neglected/dependent referrals. African American males in the neglected/dependent category total **1,386** and represent **13.5%** of the total juvenile population with neglected/dependent referrals. Their numbers are similar to their female counterparts who total **1,435** and represent slightly higher percentage of the total juvenile population with neglected/dependent referrals at **14.0%**.

Please note the tables on the next page graphically depict what was discussed above and be advised that neglected/dependent data is underreported to the Council because of the varying methods different juvenile courts use to file petitions.

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Children* with Delinquent Referrals by Race and Sex for CY 2007

	White	African American	Native American	Asian	Mixed Race	Unknown Race	Total
Male	32,732	19,340	51	248	778	1,562	54,711
Female	13,823	7,413	40	111	241	397	22,025
Unknown Sex	23	27	0	0	3	110	163
Totals	46,578	26,780	91	359	1,022	2,069	76,899

Children* with Status/Unruly Referrals by Race and Sex for CY 2007

	White	African American	Native American	Asian	Mixed Race	Unknown Race	Total
Male	11,025	3,761	14	89	202	508	15,599
Female	8,024	2,290	22	53	170	311	10,870
Unknown Sex	8	9	1	0	0	30	48
Totals	19,057	6,060	37	142	372	849	26,517

Children* with Dependency/Neglect/Abuse Allegations by Race and Sex for CY 2007

	White	African American	Native American	Asian	Mixed Race	Unknown Race	Total
Male	3,193	1,386	8	3	152	306	5,048
Female	3,189	1,435	7	4	135	296	5,066
Unknown Sex	18	10	0	0	1	138	167
Totals	6,400	2,831	15	7	288	740	10,281

* A child may be counted in more than one category

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REFERRALS BY AGE GROUP, RACE, AND SEX FOR CY 2007

The chart on the next page depicts the number of referrals to juvenile courts by age, race and sex. When looking at age, the 2007 data indicated that the largest number of referrals totaling **53,900** and representing **32.8%** of the total number of referrals **164,340** fall within the 15 through 16 years of age category. White males represented the greatest number of those referrals in this age category totaling **21,979**, or **40.8%** of the juvenile court population in the 15 through 16 years of age category and outnumbering their female counterparts who totaled **12,236** representing **22.7%** of juveniles in this age category. African American males represented the second largest number of referrals in the 15 through 16 years of age category totaling **11,502** or **21.3%** and outnumbering their female counterparts who totaled **5,468** or **10.1%** of the juveniles in this age category.

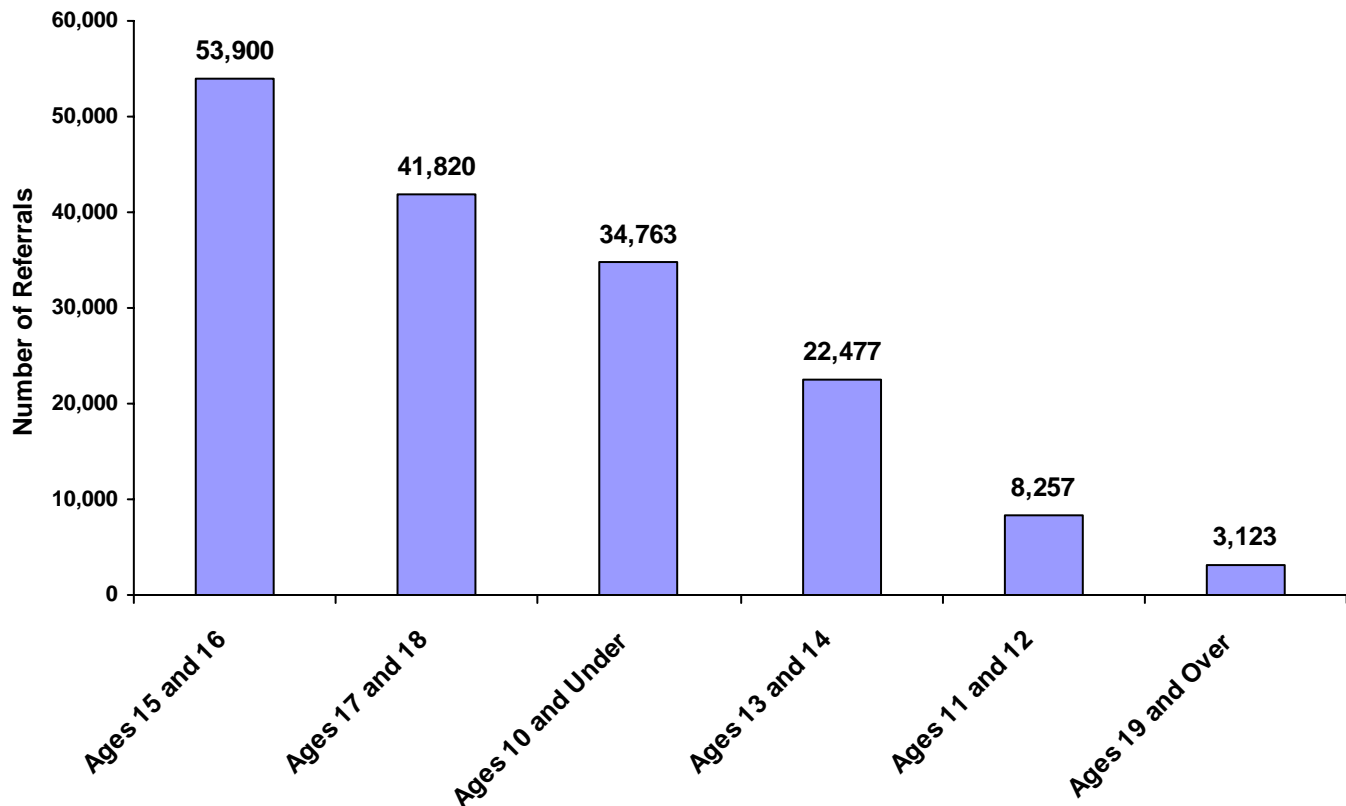
The chart depicts these numbers graphically and shows that the number of referrals decrease as the juvenile age increases, as shown in the 19 and over years of age category which had the fewest referrals **3,123**, or **1.9%** reported for juveniles whose ages were known at the time of referral.

TENNESSEE COUNCIL OF JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES 2007 ANNUAL JUVENILE COURT STATISTICAL REPORT

Referrals by Age Group, Race, and Sex for CY 2007

	White Male	African American Male	Other Race Male	White Female	African American Female	Other Race Female	Unknown Race or Sex	Total	% of Total Referrals
Birth through Age 10	10,447	4,831	661	9,725	4,515	613	3,971	34,763	21.15%
Ages 11 and 12	2,874	1,837	137	1,823	1,054	76	456	8,257	5.02%
Ages 13 and 14	7,792	5,771	312	4,723	2,936	218	725	22,477	13.68%
Ages 15 and 16	21,979	11,502	746	12,236	5,468	338	1,631	53,900	32.80%
Ages 17 and 18	19,590	7,976	484	9,146	3,127	217	1,280	41,820	25.45%
Ages 19 and Over	1,024	595	9	510	212	6	767	3,123	1.90%
All Age Group Totals	63,706	32,512	2,349	38,163	17,312	1,468	8,830	164,340	

Total Referrals by Age Group
Total = 164,340



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CHILDREN REFERRED BY AGE GROUP, RACE AND SEX FOR CY 2007

Refer to the chart on the next page to see statistics for the number of individual children that were referred to juvenile courts by age, race, and sex in 2007. The 2007 data indicated that the largest number of children fall within the 15 through 16 years of age category. The largest number of children referred totaling **27,375**, representing **30.2%**, fall within the 15 through 16 years of age category. White males represented the greatest number of those children in this age category totaling **11,194**, or **40.9%** and outnumbering their female counterparts who totaled **7,091** representing **25.9%** of the juvenile court population in the 15 through 16 years of age category. African American males represented the third largest number of children referred in the 15 through 16 years of age category totaling **4,844** or **17.7%** outnumbering their female counterparts who totaled **2,985** or **10.9%** of juveniles referred in this age category.

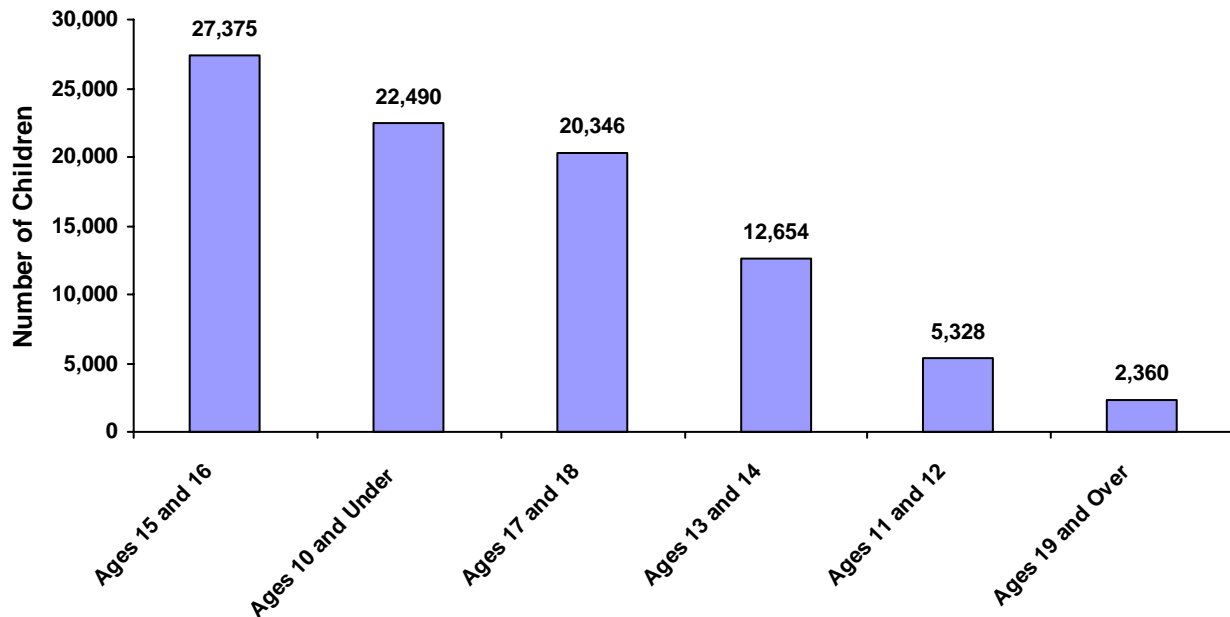
The chart depicts these numbers graphically and shows that the number of children decreases as the juvenile age increases, as shown in the 19 and over years of age category. This category had the lowest number of children referred **2,360** or **2.6%** whose ages were known at the time of referral.

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Children Referred by Age Group, Race and Sex for CY 2007

	White Male	African American Male	Other Race Male	White Female	African American Female	Other Race Female	Unknown Race or Sex	Total	% of All Children Referred
Birth through Age 10	6,415	3,415	382	6,033	3,187	358	2,700	22,490	24.84%
Ages 11 and 12	1,786	1,177	77	1,170	773	42	303	5,328	5.88%
Ages 13 and 14	4,365	2,922	164	2,832	1,805	97	469	12,654	13.97%
Ages 15 and 16	11,194	4,844	280	7,091	2,985	187	794	27,375	30.23%
Ages 17 and 18	9,447	3,135	202	5,254	1,627	113	568	20,346	22.47%
Ages 19 and Over	789	419	9	367	151	4	621	2,360	2.61%
All Age Group Totals	33,996	15,912	1,114	22,747	10,528	801	5,455	90,553	

Total Children by Age Group - Total = 90,553



**TENNESSEE COUNCIL OF JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES
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CHILDREN REFERRED BY RACE AND SEX FOR CY 2007

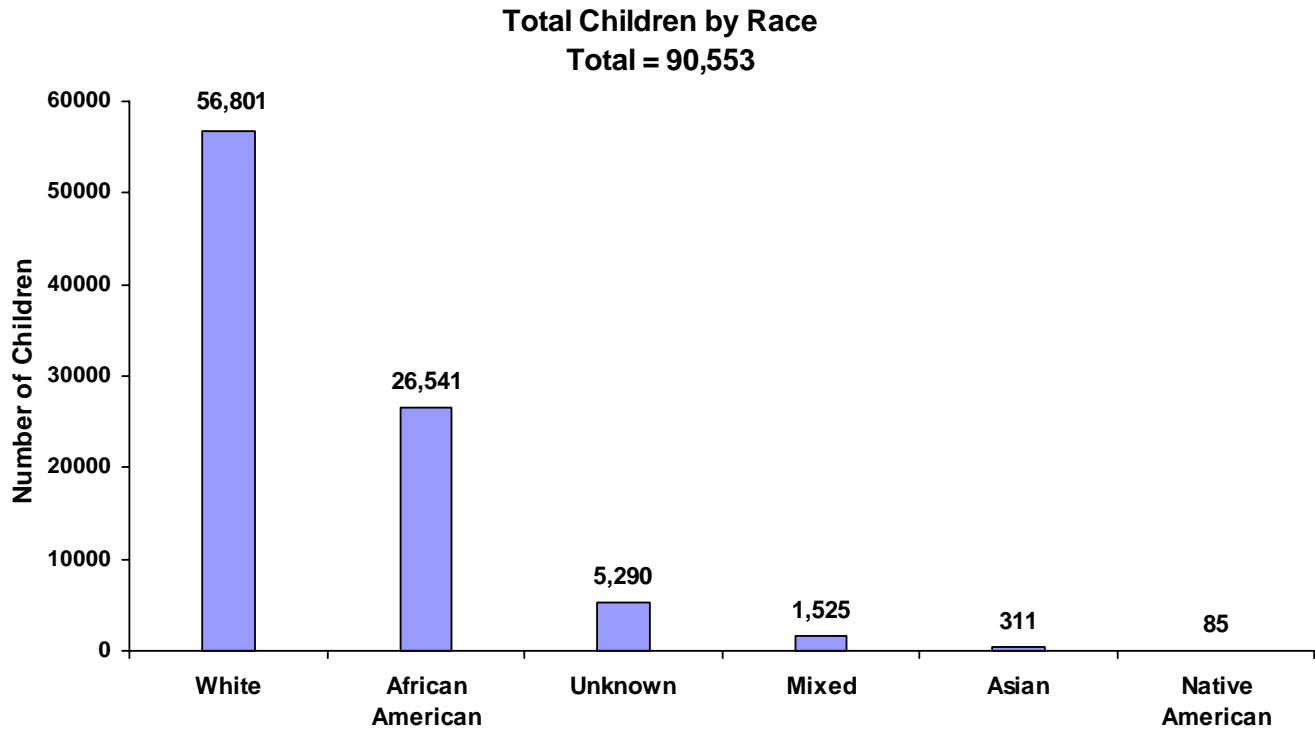
The Children Referred by Race and Sex table shows the number of children by race and sex who were referred to juvenile court in 2007.

White males **(33,996)** outnumbered their female counterparts **(22,747)** and represented **37.5%** as opposed to **25.1%** of the juvenile population **(90,553)** as a whole. African American males **(15,912)** represented **17.6%** of the juvenile court population and outnumbered their female counterparts, who totaled **10,528** and represented **11.6%** of the juvenile court population. These percentage data are consistent with those of years 1995 through 2006.

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Children Referred by Race and Sex for CY 2007

	Male	Female	Unknown	Total
White	33,996	22,747	58	56,801
African American	15,912	10,528	101	26,541
Native American	44	40	1	85
Asian	194	117	0	311
Mixed	876	644	5	1,525
Unknown Race	2,758	1,891	641	5,290
All Race Totals	53,780	35,967	806	90,553



CHILDREN OF HISPANIC ORIGIN BY RACE AND SEX FOR CY 2007

The Children of Hispanic Origin by Race and Sex for CY 2007 table shows the number of children that were referred to juvenile court in 2007. All racial categories may contain juveniles who were considered to be of Hispanic origin or ethnicity. Please note that some courts classify Hispanic origin as a race and others treat Hispanic origin as an ethnicity and categorize these juveniles as white. Some courts do not report this data at all which means that data on Hispanic ethnicity or origin is under-reported in Tennessee.

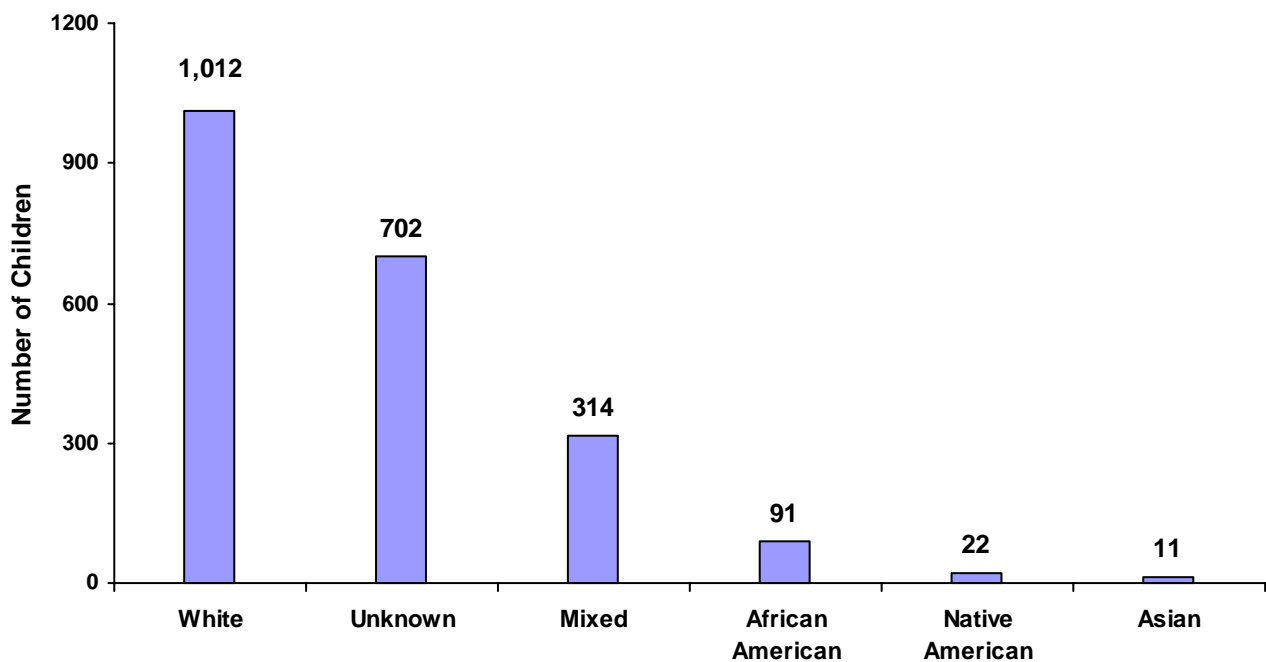
The AOC received clarification and guidance from the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) on the definition of Hispanic origin and how it should be reported. “The Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity (Excerpt from Federal Register, October 30, 1997)” defines Hispanic or Latino as follows: A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. The term, “Spanish origin,” can be used in addition to “Hispanic or Latino.”

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Children of Hispanic Origin by Race and Sex for CY 2007

	Male	Female	Unknown	Total
White	669	342	1	1,012
African American	58	33	0	91
Native American	14	7	1	22
Asian	9	2	0	11
Mixed	193	121	0	314
Unknown	477	221	4	702
All Race Totals	1,420	726	6	2,152

**Total Children of Hispanic Origin
Total = 2,152**



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COURTS REPORTING THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF MINORITY RACES AND SEX

Races are currently defined as follows: **White, African American, Native American, Asian, and Mixed Race**. The AOC has asked the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) for clarification and expansion of these categories based on requests from different juvenile courts. The courts do not feel that their juvenile population is accurately represented when their racial categories are limited to those indicated above.

The information below is quoted directly from the publication, "Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity (Excerpt from Federal Register, October 30, 1997)", which "provides a minimum standard for maintaining, collecting, and presenting data on race and ethnicity for all Federal reporting purposes. The categories in this classification are social-political constructs and should not be interpreted as being scientific or anthropological in nature. They are not to be used as determinants of eligibility for participation in any Federal program. The standards have been developed to provide a common language for uniformity and comparability in the collection and use of data on race and ethnicity by Federal agencies. The standards have five categories for data on race: **American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White**. There are two categories for data on ethnicity: **'Hispanic or Latino,'** and **'Not Hispanic or Latino.'**

--Categories and Definitions - The minimum categories for data on race and ethnicity for Federal statistics, program administrative reporting, and civil rights compliance reporting are defined as follows:

--American Indian or Alaska Native. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.

--Asian. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam

--Black or African American. A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa. Terms such as "Haitian" or "Negro" can be used in addition to "Black or African American."

--Hispanic or Latino. A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. The term, "Spanish origin," can be used in addition to "Hispanic or Latino."

--Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

-- White. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa."